



Participant Handbook

Acknowledgement of Country

In the spirit of reconciliation, Mercy Connect acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the Traditional Custodians of this country, and their connection to land, water and community. We pay our respect to them, their cultures and customs, and to Elders past and present.

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Welcome

This handbook gives you information about Mercy Connect and how we can work with you.

If you have any questions, you can ask your support person.

If you need this information in another format or language, please let us know.

Who we are

Mercy Connect is a not-for-profit organisation. We use the money to help people like you and the community.

Mercy Connect:

-  Can help you to live a better life.
-  Can provide good care and important information.
-  Is part of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).
-  Offers many services.
-  Works with young and older people.
-  Works in New South Wales and Victoria.
-  Is part of Mercy Ministry Companions.

Key Contacts

Operational Services

Felicity Lawes



Felicity.Lawes@mercyconnect.org.au

Clinical Services

Megan Pearce



Megan.Pearce@mercyconnect.org.au

Enquiries



02 6043 3500



Enquiries@mercyconnect.org.au



www.mercyconnect.org.au/contact-us



30 Bottlebrush Street Thurgoona NSW 2640



2/196 Lords Place Orange NSW 2800

Our Values



Compassion

Listen to and understand each story.



Hospitality

Friendly, caring and non-judgemental help.



Respect

For decisions and choices.



Innovation

Better ways to meet needs.



Teamwork

High quality help.



Accountability

Responsible for what we do.

Your rights and what we expect

These rights are protected by law.

You have the right to:



Be treated with respect.



Feel safe.



Be part of decisions that involve you.



Be given information you understand.



Make sure your information is private.

Refer to the NDIS Practice Standards for more information.

www.ndiscommission.gov.au/rules-and-standards/ndis-practice-standards



We expect you to:

- Treat staff and others with respect.
- Know that everyone has the same rights.
- Give us the information we need so we can help you.

If you need help to understand, talk to your support person. Do not sign anything you do not understand.

Our promise to you, **we will**:

-  Respect your rights.
-  Respect your privacy.
-  Support you with care and skill.
-  Be honest and open.
-  Act quickly when there is a problem.
-  Help you if someone hurts or tries to harm you.
-  Do all that we can to keep you safe from abuse or neglect.
-  Always carry out our work with Mercy Connect values in mind.



Choice and Control

You are the best person to make decisions about your life. You can also make decisions about what kind of help you want.



You have the right to:

-  Do things you want to do.
-  Do things you like.
-  Choose the help you get.
-  Choose who will help you.
-  Choose another service.
-  Have relationships with people you like.
-  Get a second opinion.
-  Refuse help.
-  Get your support person to help you make decisions.

Support Coordination

Support coordination helps you connect with services and manage your supports so you can reach your goals.

If your NDIS plan includes Support Coordination, we can help you with this.

There are 3 levels of support coordination that can be included in your plan:

Level 1: Support Connection

-  We help you understand your NDIS plan.
-  We support you to find and connect with services like NDIS providers, community groups, and other supports.
-  Our goal is to help you get the most out of your plan.
-  We also help you build confidence and skills so you can manage your plan on your own in the future.

Level 2: Coordination of Supports

-  We help you organise different supports that work well together.
-  These supports can help you:
 - Keep good relationships
 - Manage daily tasks
 - Live more independently
 - Be part of the community
-  We also help you build confidence and skills so you can make choices and direct your life, not just your services.

Level 3: Specialist Support Coordination

-  This is a higher level of support for people with more complex situations.
-  A specialist support coordinator will help you manage challenges with your supports.
-  They make sure your services work well and stay consistent.

Choosing Your Level of Support Coordination

-  Your NDIS plan may say what level of support coordination you get or how it should be delivered.
-  If your plan does not say the level, you can choose the level that suits your needs.
-  You can also choose how your support coordination is delivered.

If your NDIS plan has Support Coordination, we can talk with you about the support choices you have.

Safety

We want you to feel safe and be safe. We will work with you to keep you safe.



You have the right to:

 Be safe.

 Be cared for.

 Be treated fairly.

 Have choices.

 Live the way you want to.



Safety of Children

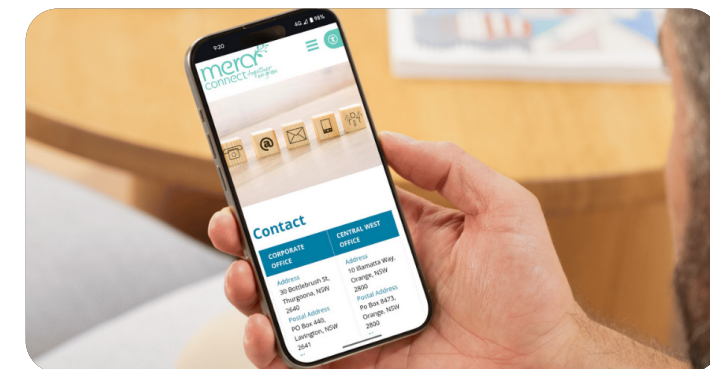
Children and young people have the right to be safe.



We will always:

 Help children, young people and their families.

 Make sure that children stay in safe places.



We have our policies about child safety on our website.

 www.mercyconnect.org.au/policies

Our Approach to Child Safety & Care

Safety

Young people’s safety, welfare and wellbeing is important.



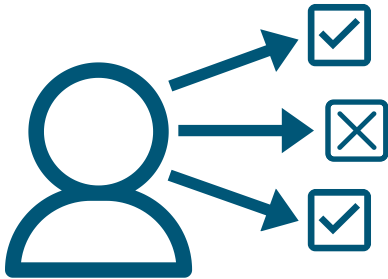
Family

- You will be supported in connecting with your family or friends.
- Parents can help plan supports.
- We care and support all cultural needs.
- Respite services are critical to support relationships between young people and parents.
- We will try and provide services in the right home and close to family.



Decisions

- Young people can make informed choices about services and participate in decision making.
- Young people are at the centre of decision making. We will work with other agencies to improve your supports.



Governance

- Young people can stay in accommodation or access supports with other young people.
- We have rules to manage behaviours.
- All Support Workers supporting young people are well trained and meet the legal standards and qualifications.



Feedback



We want your input. It helps us to make our services better.

You can:

- Tell us what is working well.
- Tell us what we can do better.
- Ask your support person to help you when talking to us.

It is OK to make a complaint.

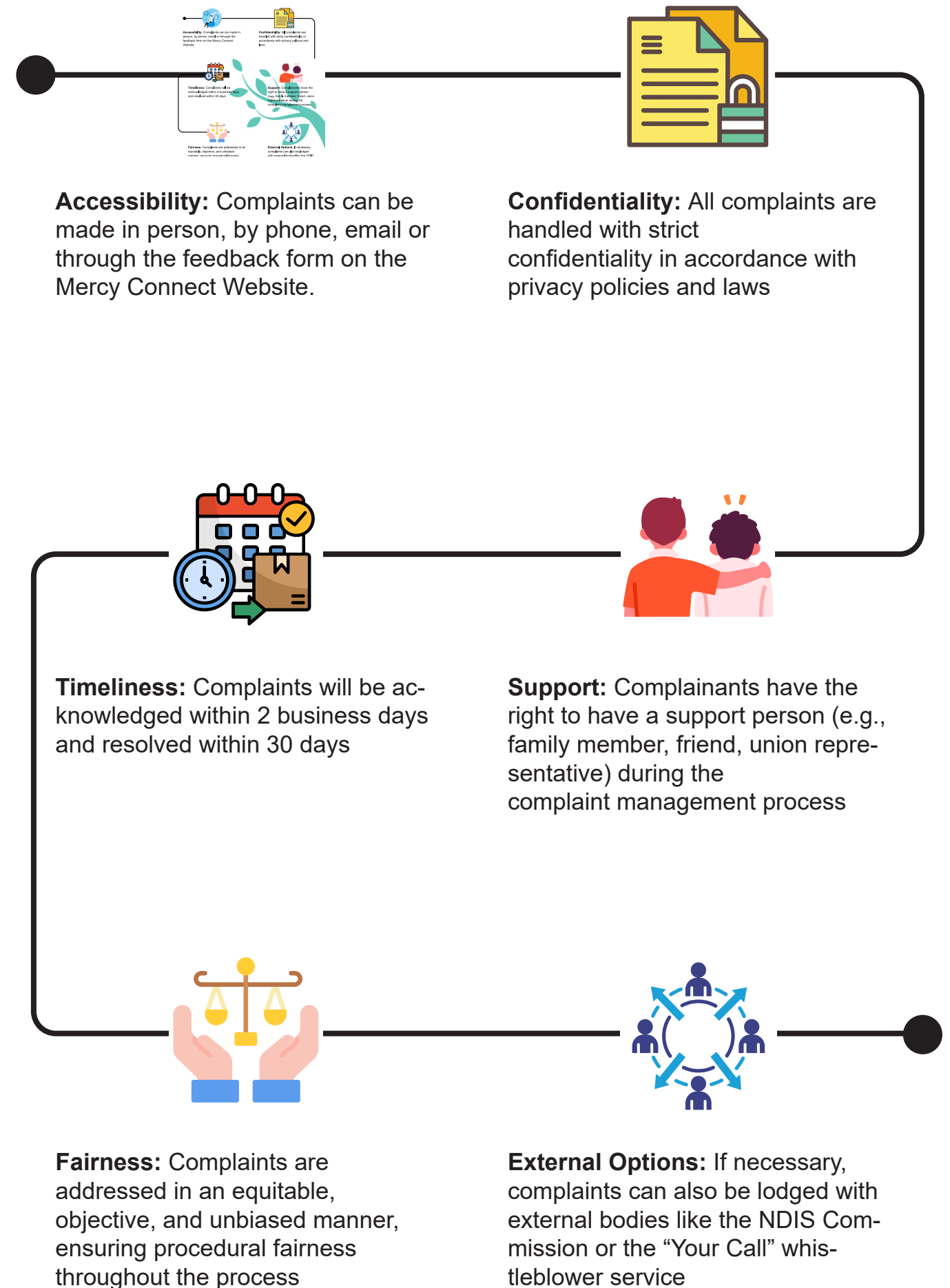
A complaint is telling someone that you are not happy about something. It is **OK** to make a complaint.

It could be about:

- Your supports
- Mercy Connect's Services.
- Support staff.

We will:

- Listen to your complaint.
- Treat you with respect.
- Keep your complaint private.
- Respond to your complaint in a fair way.



Details to provide feedback or make a complaint



 02 6043 3500

 enquiries@mercyconnect.org.au

 www.mercyconnect.org.au/contact-us

If you are not happy with the way we have dealt with your complaint you can contact our Chief Executive Officer.

You can also ask for help from:



NDIS Quality & Safeguards Commission

 1800 035 544

 feedback@ndiscommision.gov.au



Disability Services Commissioner

 1800 677 342

 TTY: 1300 726 563

 complaints@odsc.vic.gov.au



National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA)

 1300 362 072

 TTY: 1800 555 677 then ask for 1800 800 110

 feedback@ndis.gov.au

Advocacy

Advocacy is about being heard.

An advocate can help you:

- To change things in your life.
- When you are not being listened to.

We can help you find an advocate.

Regional Disability Advocacy Service (RDAS) - Albury

Free advocacy and information.

 1800 250 292

 admin@rdas.org.au

Disability Advocacy New South Wales - Central West

Free advocacy and information.

 1300 365 085

 da@da.org.au

Privacy

We care about your privacy.

We will:

- Respect your privacy, safety and dignity.
- Seek your permission if we need to talk to someone.
- Share information that affects you.
- Keep information about you private and confidential.

You have the right to:

 Know why and how we keep information about you.

 Know when information about you will be shared.

 Ask us to explain the information to you.

 Ask us to change the information if it is wrong.

 Complain if you think information about you has not been kept private.

Safeguarding

As a registered NDIS provider, Mercy Connect must regularly check the quality of our services. This helps us make sure we are meeting the quality standards set by the NDIS.

We do this by having 'audits' which are like quality checks. There are two kinds of audits:

 **External Audits:** Done by outside experts approved by NDIS.

 **Internal Audits:** Led by Mercy Connect's Quality Team.

Anyone receiving support from Mercy Connect is automatically included for audits.

We will:

- Contact you or your decision-maker before any audit to ask if you would like to be personally interviewed.
- Have personal interviews and give you the opportunity to share your thoughts and experiences with our services.
- Look at information about our services for you, including your details.

You have the right to:

 Ask someone you trust to support you during a personal interview with the auditor.

 Choose how you would like to talk to the auditor.

 Say no to a personal interview with the auditor.

For more information or to opt out of audits please contact:

 02 6043 3500

 privacy@mercyconnect.org.au



Corporate Office

30 Bottlebrush Street
Thurgoona NSW 2640

Central West

2/196 Lords Place
Orange NSW 2800

P: 02 6043 3500

E: enquiries@mercyconnect.org.au

W: www.mercyconnect.org.au

ABN: 45 075 648 378

